

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7 and 16 are amended, with claim 14 being canceled. Claims 1-13 and 16 currently pending in the application.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-14 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Albrecht et al (U.S. 6,160,686) in view of Boutaghou et al. (U.S. 6,122,130).

As the examiner has noted, Albrecht is silent to a ramp that includes a liquid that is chemically incompatible with the polymer with the liquid being in the form of droplets that are distributed in the polymer. However, the examiner has mischaracterized the teachings of Boutaghou. In the office action, the examiner states that the "droplets are distributed in the polymer." This assertion is incorrect. In col. 5, lines 20-22 (while describing Fig. 3) it is stated that the sliding surface of the ramp is coated with a Liquid-Crystalline-Polymer based lubricant layer/film. There is nothing in Boutaghou to suggest the incorporation of the lubricant into the body of the ramp itself. In addition, Boutaghou does not provide for or suggest a mechanism of delivery in order to replenish the layer of lubricant present on the surface of the ramp.

In Albrecht, it is disclosed that a PTFE filled ramp may be used in order to reduce friction and wear. It is important to note that PTFE is not a liquid that migrates to the surface, but rather a solid that is uncovered as the ramp wears. There simply is no provision for the replenishment of the lubricant layer on the ramp itself. Neither Albrecht nor Boutaghou, solely or in combination teach or suggest a liquid that is incorporated into the ramp body that migrates to the surface of the ramp to form a layer of lubricant so that the layer is kept at a substantially constant thickness. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to better reflect this distinction. Based on the above, it is clear that no prima facie case of obviousness has been made, as the combination do not teach or suggest all of the

claim limitations of the present application. Applicant requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 7, as well as the rejection of dependent claims 2-6 and 8-12.

Claim 13 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Albrecht in view of Boutaghou. Claim 13 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 14, which has been canceled. With the incorporation of the limitations of claim 14, claim 13 now claims both a means for loading/unloading a read/write head, but also a means for feeding a lubricant to the means for loading/unloading. The functional limitations of the claim must be construed in correspondence with the corresponding structure disclosed in the specification. In re Donaldson, 29 U.S.P.Q.2d 1845 (Fed. Cir. 1994) (en banc). As amended, the means for feeding a lubricant is described on page 7, lines 3-17 of the specification. For the reasons discussed above, claim 13 and its dependent claim 16 are patentable over Albrecht in view of Boutaghou in that the combination of references do not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations as presented in claim 13. Therefore, the examiner has not made a prima facie case of obviousness. Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection and the allowance of claims 13 and 16.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 7 and 13 are patentable over the applied references, and that claims 2-6, 8-12 and 16 are patentable for the same reasons by virtue of their dependency from independent claims. Applicant therefore respectfully requests for reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to claims. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for expeditious resolution of any outstanding or additional issues that may arise.

Respectfully submitted,

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(Assignee of the Entire Interest)

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Date

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